

CANID news

Volume 2026 | Issue 0



Cape fox (*Vulpes chama*)
Photo: Gerrie van Vuuren



Dear Canid enthusiasts

Back in 1993 we started our newsletter **Canid News**, as a bulletin for the IUCN SSC Canid Specialist Group (CSG). There were three printed issues ([Vol 1](#), [Vol 2](#), [Vol 3](#)) edited by David Macdonald and Laura Handoca, before the newsletter transmuted in 2001 to our peer-reviewed journal [Canid Biology & Conservation](#).

Aware of the relevance of having a regular newsletter and encouraged by a kind offer from Shlomo Preiss-Bloom to be its editor, we are pleased to launch our volume 0, which we plan to follow with quarterly issues.

This digest, complementary to the journal, aims to keep you informed of current canid research and conservation activities around the globe. It is intended to cater to all *caniphiles* - researchers, conservationists, and canid lovers alike. We hope it sparks interest, synergies, and action to advance the study and conservation of wild canids around the world.

Canid News relies on your news pieces, vignettes and canid tidbits for establishing this newsletter as a dynamic platform of exchange. Brief natural history notes and records that might not make it to swift publication elsewhere are most welcome here. Please send us your canid related content, large or small, in this [Canid News Content Submission Form](#).

With our very best wishes for the New Year to the global pack of wild canid fans.

Claudio Sillero & Geraldine Werhahn
Co-Chairs
IUCN SSC Canid Specialist Group

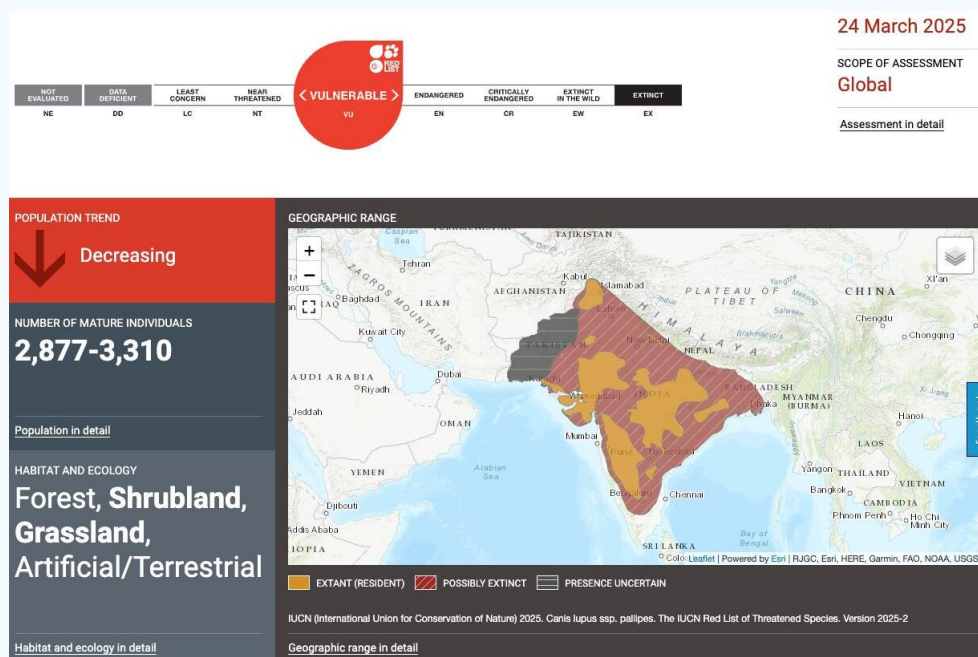
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NEWS FROM THE RED LIST OF THREATENED SPECIES

ASIAN WOLF SUBSPECIES: RECENT FIRST RED LIST ASSESSMENTS

INDIAN WOLF RED LIST ASSESSMENT

The **Indian Wolf** (*Canis lupus pallipes*) was assessed for the first time in 2025 and is currently listed as **Vulnerable** on the IUCN Red List, reflecting ongoing population declines and increasing threats across its range. The assessment estimates a global population of approximately 2,900–3,300 mature individuals, primarily in India with much smaller numbers persisting in Pakistan, and possibly extinct status in Bangladesh. Population declines of 30–40% over the past three generations are inferred from long-term monitoring and regional studies, driven largely by persecution, habitat loss and fragmentation, road mortality, disease transmission from free-ranging dogs, and low representation within protected areas. The assessment highlights the Indian Wolf as one of the most evolutionarily distinct wolf lineages globally and emphasizes the urgent need for targeted conservation actions in unprotected grassland landscapes, including safeguarding breeding sites, mitigating human-wolf conflict, managing feral dog populations, and strengthening transboundary cooperation.

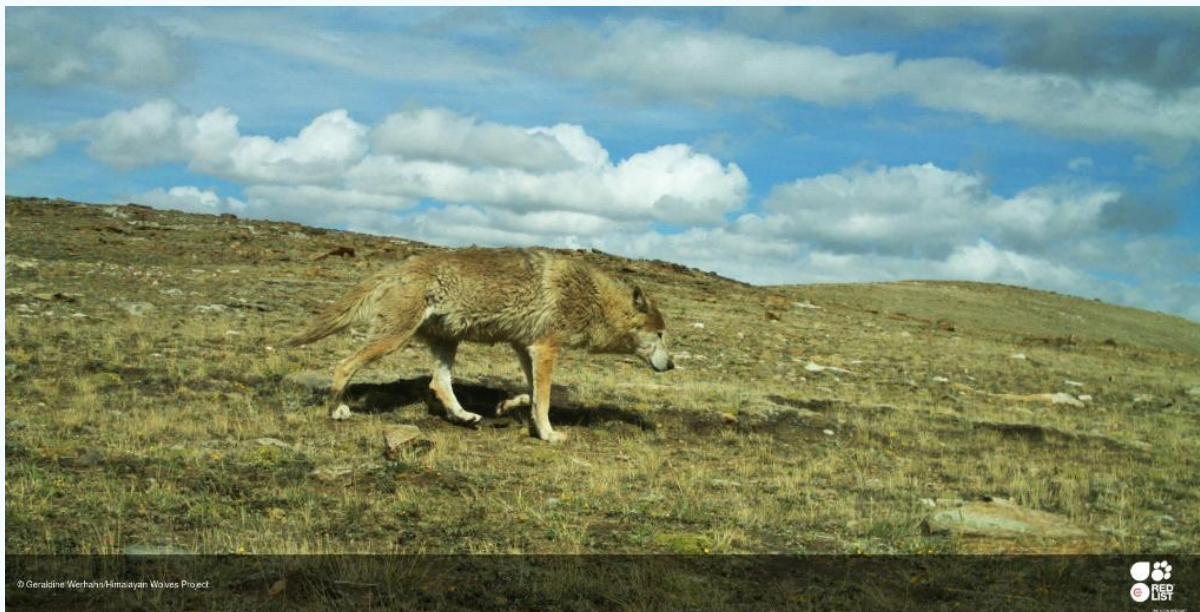


Source: Hennelly et al., 2025

<https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2025-2.RLTS.T223987953A223987966.en>.

HIMALAYAN WOLF RED LIST ASSESSMENT

The Himalayan wolf (*Canis lupus chanco*) was assessed for the first time on the IUCN Red List in 2024 and is currently listed as **Vulnerable**, reflecting its small and declining population and ongoing threats across the high-altitude landscapes of Central Asia. The assessment estimates a population of approximately 2,275–3,792 mature individuals, with a decreasing trend driven by habitat degradation, persecution, prey depletion, and increasing human pressures in alpine and pastoral systems. Although Himalayan wolves were recognized as distinct as early as the 19th century, only in the past decade has genetic research confirmed them as an evolutionarily distinct wolf lineage, separate from the widespread Holarctic grey wolf. This first Red List assessment synthesizes the latest ecological and genetic evidence and provides a critical foundation for targeted conservation planning for one of the world's most unique and least-studied wolf lineages.



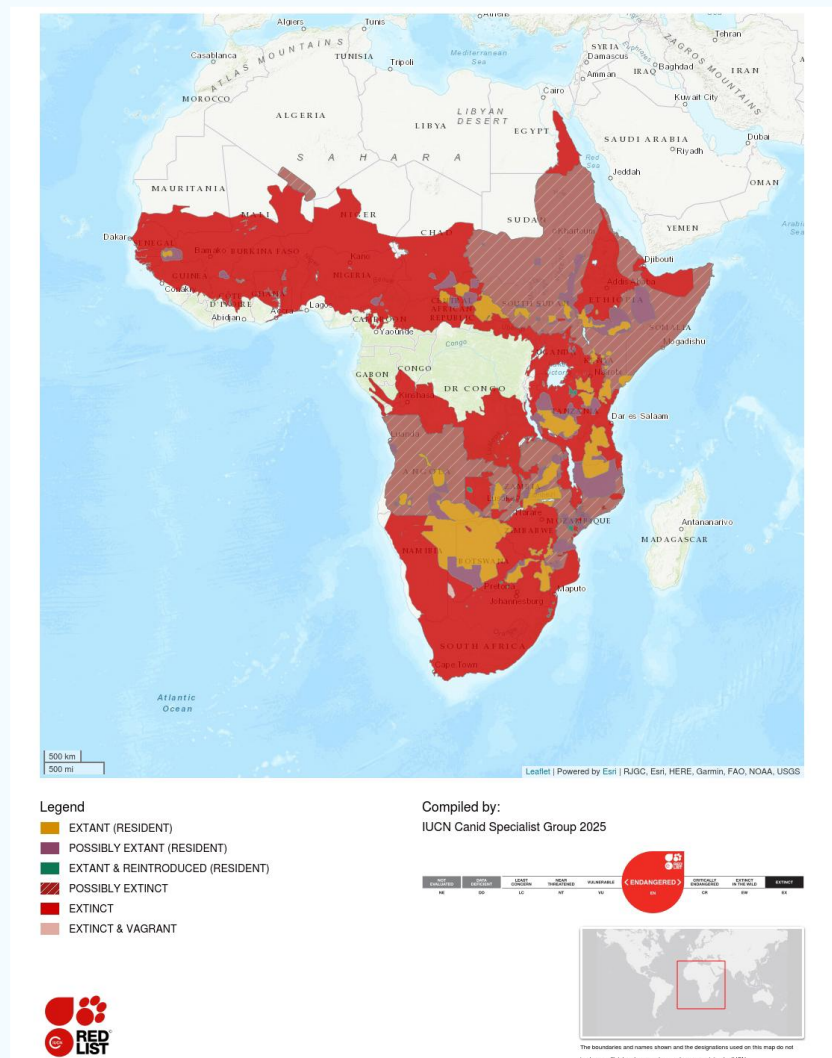
Source: Werhahn et al. 2024

<https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2024-1.RLTS.T223987824A258477123.en>.

AFRICAN WILD DOG RED LIST ASSESSMENT UPDATE

The African wild dog (*Lycaon pictus*) was reassessed in 2025 and remains listed as **Endangered** on the IUCN Red List, reflecting its continued vulnerability to disease, habitat fragmentation, and human-related mortality. The assessment estimates a global population of approximately 1,700 mature individuals in fewer than 700 packs, distributed across fragmented populations in eastern and southern Africa. While recent surveys have identified previously undocumented packs, particularly in parts of Angola, these findings largely reflect improved survey coverage rather than population recovery.

The assessment emphasizes wild dogs' characteristic boom-and-bust dynamics, with local populations highly susceptible to stochastic events such as canine distemper outbreaks, snaring, road mortality, and conflict with livestock producers. Maintaining large, connected landscapes and reducing human-mediated mortality are highlighted as essential priorities for the long-term persistence of this wide-ranging social canid.



Source: Woodroffe et al. 2025

<https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2025-2.RLTS.T12436A221299510.en>.

NEWS FROM THE WORKING GROUPS

DHOLE CONSERVATION WORKSHOP

IUCN SSC CSG's Dhole Working Group, in partnership with the Faculty of Forestry, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the Department of National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, and the Smithsonian Institution, organized a Dhole Conservation Workshop in Thailand in December 2025. The goal of this workshop was to bring together 60 experts from government and non-government agencies, as well as academic institutions to share information about the population status, discuss threats, and identify conservation priorities for dholes in Thailand.



© Nucharin Songsasen (CSG Dhole Working Group Coordinator)

ARCTIC FOX WORKING GROUP

The 7th International Conference on Arctic Fox Biology was held in Churchill, Canada, from 26–29 September 2025, bringing together researchers, conservation practitioners, and students from across the circumpolar north to discuss emerging challenges facing Arctic foxes in a rapidly changing Arctic. Hosted by the Churchill Northern Studies Centre, the meeting focused on the theme “Climate change and the Arctic fox: Quantifying the threats and identifying data gaps,” and opened with workshops on climate change impacts, including synthesis talks by Anders Angerbjörn (CSG Arctic Fox Working Group Coordinator) and Paula White.

Scientific sessions and posters spanned topics such as population status and monitoring, ecophysiology and contaminants, trophic interactions linking marine and terrestrial systems, emerging diseases, genetics and connectivity, and interactions with red foxes. A public lecture on fox dynamics along the Hudson Bay coast and a keynote session on culture and scientific research in Churchill highlighted the importance of community engagement and long-term, place-based research. The conference concluded with a field excursion into the Churchill Wildlife Management Area and strong participation both in person and online, underscoring the continued value of circumpolar collaboration for Arctic fox conservation.



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CANIDS IN THE NEWS

POTENTIAL TOOL USE BY WOLVES

A recent paper by [Artelle and Paquet 2025](#) in *Ecology and Evolution* documents rare video footage of grey wolves in coastal British Columbia manipulating human fishing gear to access food, a behavior that may represent the first reported example of tool use in wild wolves. Remote cameras deployed by Haíłzaqv Nation Guardians recorded wolves pulling buoy lines to retrieve crab traps from the water, then extracting and consuming the bait in a clear, multi-step sequence.



Remote camera video of a wolf in Haíłzaqv Territory pulling partially submerged green crab trap to shore to access baited cup within. Source: <https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.72348>

The study attracted wide media attention, including coverage in *Discover Magazine*, where Claudio Sillero commented: “Although the wolves did not manufacture the tool themselves, they were able to manipulate objects in a goal-directed, sequential way to access food. That fits accepted definitions of tool use and is a tremendously exciting find.” He added that the observations reveal cognitive sophistication and behavioral flexibility in wolves, noting that “rare, context-specific behaviours can reveal latent capabilities,” and that the wolves demonstrated an opportunistic foraging strategy extending beyond typical predation tactics. Beyond its implications

for canid cognition, the study highlights the critical role of Indigenous-led monitoring in revealing rarely observed aspects of wolf behavior.

ARTICLES IN CANID BIOLOGY & CONSERVATION

FIRST RECORD OF A MANED WOLF PREYING ON GREATER RHEA

The maned wolf *Chrysocyon brachyurus* is the largest canid in South America; however, its diet primarily consists of fruits, small vertebrates, and invertebrates. Despite extensive studies on its feeding ecology, reports of hunting larger prey are limited. Here, Meniz et al. 2025 present a field observation of predation by a male maned wolf on an adult greater rhea *Rhea americana* and the sharing of the carcass with its breeding pair. This event was recorded in the Cerrado biome of Central Brazil providing new insights into the hunting behaviour of maned wolves.

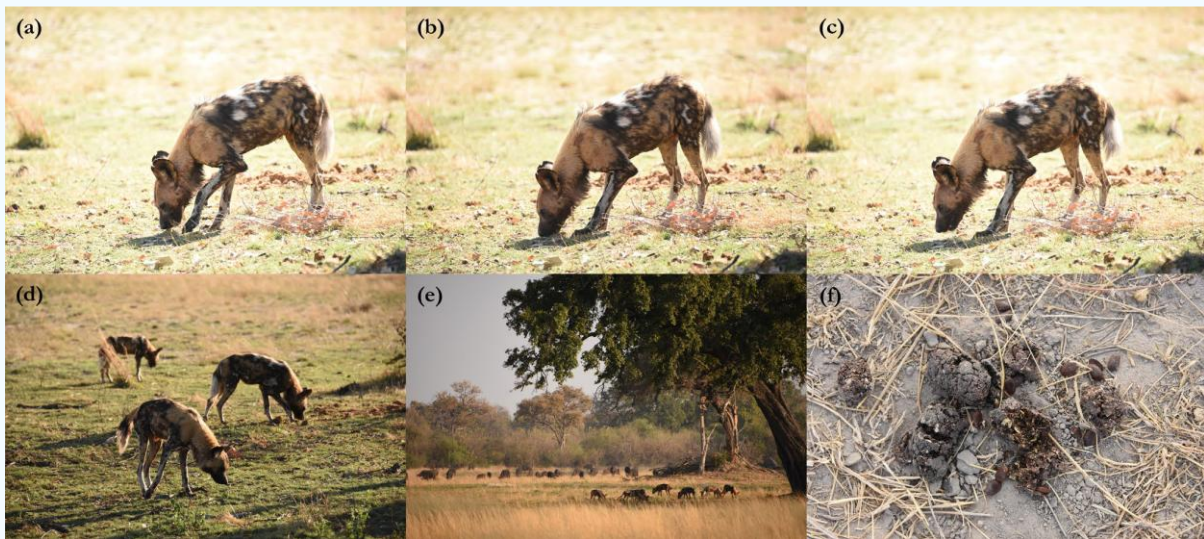


Predation event of a male maned wolf on an adult rhea: (a) male wolf holding the rhea by its neck, moments after killing it [photo by Sjaack Klaassen], (b) rhea carcass the following morning [photo by Onçafari], (c) male revisiting and feeding on the carcass, (d) female defecating on the carcass.

Source: http://www.canids.org/CBC/28/Maned_wolf_predation_rhea.pdf

FRUGIVORY IN AFRICAN WILD DOGS IN NORTHERN BOTSWANA

African wild dogs are found throughout sub-Saharan Africa. They have been observed to be exclusively carnivorous, preying mostly on small to medium sized antelopes. Direct observations conducted by Claas et al. 2025 over a period of 27 days of a single pack in the Okavango Delta in northern Botswana reported wild dogs opportunistically consuming fruit from the jackalberry tree *Diospyros mespiliformis*. This is the first record of wild dogs foraging for and consuming fruit.



(a-c) An individual is observed approaching a jackal berry with its head to the ground, taking the berry into its mouth, chewing it briefly and swallowing before moving on to find another berry. (d) Members of the pack foraging for jackal berries with their heads directed towards the ground. (e) Most (nine) of the 11 adults in the pack forage and ingest jackal berries prior to attempting to hunt the herd of buffalo in the background. (f) Wild dog scat found to contain numerous jackal berry seeds. Scats were confirmed to be wild dog either through direct observation or from latrines where individuals were observed to scent mark. All photos © Megan Claase.

Source: http://www.canids.org/CBC/28/African_wild_dog_frugivory.pdf